Ouray National Wildlife Refuge Vegetation Mapping Project

Cheatgrass Semi-natural Herbaceous Alliance (Map Code 48)



Location: The Bromus tectorum Semi-natural Herbaceous Alliance is dominant on badlands slopes comprised of river cobble and erosion fans along the base of badlands bluffs. Cheatgrass is sometimes a component of prairie dog towns and other disturbed sites; it is also widely distributed as a minor component of many upland sites. Near Woods Bottom and on the uplands of Johnson Bottom, sites disturbed by early settlers and for oil exploration have become dominated by cheatgrass and other annual species.

Signature: Cheatgrass dominated grasslands usually had very little living vegetation at the time of the photography. This yielded a very white or barren signature. Texture for this type was somewhat course due to the rocky nature of the substrate. Delineation of this type and distinguishing it from other sparse grasslands types was difficult. Finding likely areas based on topographic positions and then following-up with field verification helped with its interpretation.

